

2nd Annual Women's Leadership Gathering
April 29, 2025

Keynote Speaker Bios

KAREN FASSIO

[Karen Fassio](#) (she/her) spent 24 years at Microsoft, helping folks around the globe get comfy with new tech, build awesome community programs, and tap into growth opportunities. She led teams focused on global growth strategies and also pushed for community and economic access projects, tying in with United Nations social impact goals. Karen co-founded Women in Cloud, a community aiming to create \$1 billion in economic impact for women-led startups and women in tech. Thanks to Women in Cloud, over 5,000 women have picked up AI and cybersecurity skills, setting them up for success in the digital world. The community also focuses on leadership, policy-influence, and forming strategic partnerships to support women in their careers. Karen is on the board of the Black Channel Partner Alliance, a tech business community that offers mentorship, training, and joint marketing sponsorships. She's recently appointed the Microsoft Alumni Network Pacific Northwest Leader, a regional community of over 90k former Microsoft employees. Karen now runs a private marketing and leadership consulting practice and serves as a strategic go-to-market (GTM) and channel advisor for several AI start-ups.



BREA STARMER

[Brea Starmer](#) (she/her) is the Founder and CEO of Lions & Tigers,

a professional staffing and workforce solutions partner that bridges the gap between traditional employment and the independent workforce. Lions & Tigers (L&T) taps into the nearly 50% of professionals choosing independent work to build blended teams of employees and non-employees for enterprise clients.



Her 2023 playbook, ["Avoiding the All-Or-Nothing Workplace: Enabling People to Operate at their Highest & Best Use,"](#) provides leaders with frameworks to de-risk P&Ls, unlock skills agility, and access diverse talent pools that drive profitability and innovation.

Through their proprietary method, L&T creates sustainable work models, inclusive talent pools, and higher-performing organizational cultures. Their network of 4,000+ consultants specializes in marketing, communications, operations, project and program management, change management, and leadership coaching—available through fractional, staff augmentation, advisory, outcome-based consulting, and freelance arrangements. L&T surrounds and supports leaders who want to build the most modern, magnetic talent model on the market.

Industry leaders including Microsoft, Google, Alaska Airlines, and Smartsheet partner with Lions & Tigers to deeply entrench specialized talent within their organizations, enabling faster results and greater operational flexibility. Under Brea's leadership, L&T has created \$34M+ in economic opportunity for 250+ consultants, with a team comprising 79% women and 31% People of the Global Majority.

Brea's impact has been recognized through numerous honors, including Microsoft's "Supplier of the Year" award (2022), Puget Sound Business Journal's "40-under-40" (2022), and as a Geekwire "Geek of the Week." Her insights have been featured in Seattle Business Magazine, Puget Sound Business Journal, and on King5.

A passionate advocate for authentic leadership, Brea "parents out loud," often including her three children under 10 in work settings and encouraging her community to bring their whole selves to work.

Brea is an alumna of Washington State University, where she served as the 8th female student body president. She advises Women in Cloud, Women Channel Advisory Network, and advocates for pay equity while residing in Woodinville, WA with her college sweetheart, Andrew, and their kids.

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